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ABSTRACT

A method is provided for enabling a computer that processes data formatted in a first format to read a data unit that is formatted in a second format from a storage subsystem that is capable of storing data in either the first format or the second format. The method comprises the steps of dispatching, from the computer to the storage subsystem, a command for the storage subsystem to report a data length of the data unit; sending, from the storage subsystem to the computer, a value of the data length that enables the computer to determine whether the data unit is in the first format or in the second format and prepare for receipt of the data unit in the first format or the second format, having the indicated data length; dispatching, from the computer to the storage subsystem, a command for the storage subsystem to forward the data unit to the computer; and sending the data unit from the storage subsystem to the computer.